



“Strathfield”

By J. H. Johnson.

THIS delightful garden surrounds the palatial residence of Mr. Joseph Vickery, of Strathfield. A garden in the true sense of the word, where peace and quietness reign supreme, not what might be termed a formal garden, nor yet one wild and rambling, as Nature decreed.

Being judiciously planted in years gone by with useful trees around its outskirts, it makes it entirely a world on its own.

Entering this garden by the front main drive, we at once leave the town and city to itself and are alone with Nature in her revelry of trees, shrubs and beautiful flowers.

Two huge Camphor Trees, with *Agave Americana* beneath them, are sentinels at the main gates. Passing along the broad serpentine gravelled drive, we see on either side of us hedges of Orleans roses in full flower, with many useful shrubs and trees, and in the background of these two wide borders, comprising *Rhus Succedena*, *Euphorbia Splendens*, *Brugmansias*, *Ligustrum Japonica - Tricolour Var*, *Euonemous Var*, *Nandina Domestica*, *Prunus* of sorts, *New Zealand Flax*, *Phormium Tenax Var*, and many others too numerous to men-

tion. Here and there we can see dotted along the borders such plants as *Iochroma*, *Brunsfelsia*, *Jacarandas*, and huge white *Azaleas*. These all go to make the whole landscape a thing of beauty. “Strathfield” also boasts of beautiful lawns. Along one of the side-walks can be seen specimen trees of *Mandarins*, each in its own little square bed. These trees, being evergreens, add to the beauty of the landscape, and when all in flower together make the atmosphere fragrant with their perfume; and then, lastly, when all are in full bear, holding their golden fruit to the sunshine, make it a sight worth remembering.

Along the tennis court fence, on the opposite side of this same walk, can be seen “*Mina Lobata*” in quantity,

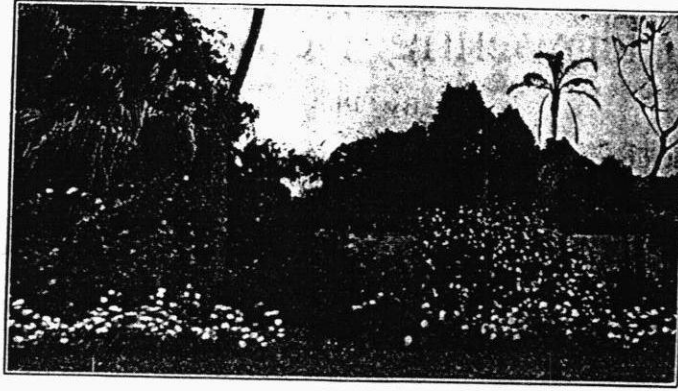
which is one of the features of “Strathfield.” One can imagine the grand sight it is to see some hundred feet of this glorious climber in full flower in the late summer. From this point and looking to the west, one can see a tropical setting. Bananas, some twenty feet in height, with their bunches of fruit now about half formed, and the rockery beside them, filled with such plants as *Dracaneas*, *Phyllocactus*, *Agaves*,



Ochna-Multiflora, etc., well balance this setting. Turning from here and looking to the north, one sees the huge Bunya-Bunza (*Aurecaria Bidwillia*), which towers to its full height above the whole of the garden. Hard by this, on the right, can be seen a very handsome specimen of the Chinese Fan Palm (*Gatania-Bobonica*), and a little further on in the distance is a giant specimen of *Phoenix Canaricusis*, some 40 feet in height. Next we turn our attention to the long walk of rose arches, at present in full flower, covered with American Pillar, Climbing Orleans, Dorothy Perkins, Hiawatha and numerous other multiflora roses, which add so much to the colour scheme of the garden, and, when in full flower, are a beautiful sight.

"Strathfield" has its share of our native flora also, including such plants as the Black Boronia, Christmas Bush, *Chorizema*, Geraldton Wax Flower, *Didiscus*, Silky Oaks, and *Eugenias*, not to forget the beautiful climber, *Bignonia Australis*, the Wonga Wonga vine, and *Stenocarpus Cunninghamii*, the wheel tree.

The large orchard is our next consideration. Here we see the largest collection of fruit trees within this radius of the city. Looking through the trees we can see the plums, peaches, apples, persimmons, pears, etc., etc., all in full bear,



the fruit nice and clean, but as yet not ready for use. Here we see, in a little corner on its own, the Red Top Grass of Bermuda (*Tricholcana Rosea*), a very useful grass for floral work, and when picked adds that finishing touch to a vase of blooms which is so much desired.

Walking around this garden, we can see preparation for Dahlias and Chrysanthe-

mums, with all types of Annuals planted out, some in flower and some yet only in their infancy. Just at the time of writing the Shasta Daisies are coming into full bloom, so also are the many coloured Verbenas, Antirrhinum, Perennial Salvias of sorts, and Canterbury Bells, with the Perennial Phlox throwing up their buds, getting ready to take on their coats of colour.

One also notices a hedge of some 24 plants of the *Comptesse de Caylâ* Rose, yet in their infancy. This Rose stands on its own as a flowering hedge, as when once established on its own roots is never out of bloom and only requires the use of a pair of hedge shears to keep it in bounds. Once more arriving at the front gates, we leave behind us one of the most natural gardens that is to be seen, and fond memories of it linger with us as we turn our backs on it and wend our way once more to the noise and bustle of civilisation.

